

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, Figures 1A and 1B stand objected to as not designating prior art. Corrected drawings including the designation "Prior Art" are submitted herewith. Except as described below, the claims have been amended to better define the invention, without narrowing the claims, for reasons unrelated to patentability. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added.

Claims 1-2 and 4-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 5,454,105 to Hatakeyama et al., and claims 3 and 19 stand rejected under §103 over Hatakeyama et al. in view of United States Patent No. 5,452,451 to Akizawa. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Applicants respectfully submit that all of the features of the present invention are not disclosed or suggested in the cited references. In particular, neither the Hatakeyama et al. reference nor the Akizawa reference, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests the claimed search system in which a plurality of search conditions are combined by logical operators to create a plurality of search condition combinations, where the plurality of search condition combinations are input as components of a single multi-dimensional search, as recited by independent claims 1, 5 and 11-16, and further where a full text search is conducted a plurality of times, as recited in all independent claims.

The Examiner appears to consider the plurality of search requests issued from individual searches (which are consolidated for a single scanning of text data) of Hatakeyama

et al. as the “plurality of search condition combinations” of the present invention (i.e., the combination of u1, u2 and u3, where the number identifies the source of the search request). However, the consolidation of u1, u2 and u3, which is input from different terminals, is not analogous to the plurality of search condition combinations which are input as components of a single, multi-dimensional search.

Hatakeyama et al. is directed to a system in which a plurality of users can conduct full text searches of a database in a time division mode. While it is possible to accept a plurality of search requests issued by a plurality of requester units, the execution of the requested searches is done in the traditional way. When the search terms that are taken from the plurality of individual searches are consolidated, the full text is scanned only once for the plurality of search terms, (i.e., instead of scanning the full text for each search term consecutively, all search terms from the plurality of searches are scanned for simultaneously).

When search results are obtained from the consolidated search, the search results are separated and outputted to the relevant search request terminals (Col. 4, line 28-31). Thus, Hatakeyama et al. does not describe using a plurality of search condition combinations, which are input as components of a single search, making the search multidimensional.

In contrast to Hatakeyama et al., which handles a plurality of search requests from a plurality of terminals, the present invention is directed to a single, multi-dimensional search in which search condition combinations are input as components of the search. In other words, different searches originating from a plurality of users at different terminals are

not combined to search the terms simultaneously. In the present invention, the plurality of combined search conditions are input within a single, multi-dimensional search. Thus, the device of Hatakeyama et al. fails to include, inter alia, the feature of independent Claims 1, 5, and 11-16 “wherein the plurality of search condition combinations are input as components of a single multi-dimensional search.” Similarly, the device of Hatakeyama et al. also fails to include, inter alia, the feature of amended independent claims 17-19 in which multi-dimensional information is input into a single search.

Further, since a certain combination of search conditions is not combined with another combination of search conditions by a logic symbol, each combination of search conditions is independent of the other search condition combinations. Since each search condition combination requires a single scan of the full text search, the full text must be searched a plurality of times, not just in a single scan as in Hatakeyama et al. Thus, the device of Hatakeyama et al. fails to include, inter alia, the feature of all independent claims, claims 1, 5, and 11-19, where a full text search is conducted a plurality of times.

Finally, the Akizawa reference fails to remedy the deficiencies discussed above. Instead, the Akizawa reference merely relates to full text searching using an automaton. More particularly, Akizawa is concerned with a finite automaton based character string search. In the system, an automaton is used for determining correspondence between character strings. Akizawa neither discloses nor suggests automatically generating combination varieties associated with plural search conditions of a set. Thus, for all of the

reasons discussed above, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of this §103 rejection of Claims 1-19.

For all of the above reasons, Applicants request reconsideration and allowance of the claimed invention. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference would aid in the prosecution of the application, or that outstanding issues exist, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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